

**Robert Adam to George Washington, January 7, 1774,
Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers.
Published by the Society of the Colonial Dames of
America. Edited by Stanislaus Murray Hamilton.**

FROM ROBERT ADAM, ESQ.

January 7th. 1774

SIR

I am favoured with yours and have given particular Attention to the Contents, it gives me some relief, when you say you are not, nor has been prejudiced with me, Conciuous I am, that to my knowledge I never did any thing to merit it, If I have not been so fortunate for some time past as I had a reasonable prosspect of, my endeavours has in no respect been the Less I am Subjected to good & bad luck, like the rest of mankind but think I have bore a greater Share of the latter for these three years past than my general Application to Business has deserved nor have I my Self to accuse for makeing a bad use of any thing and may truely say that I barely enjoy the necessarys of life and allmost a Stranger to the Innocent Amusements of it,—It was far from me to think there was any thing harsh or unreasonable in your haveing the Mortgage Executed. I frequently thought of mentioning it to you my self to have it done, when Mr. Harrison first produced it to me, he desired me read it over, I took notice of Something in the Concluseion that I thought uncommon, and mentioned it to him, at the same time told him if it was your desire that I was satisfied and would Execute it immediately this was in my Counting Room and at that time there was no person to Witness it that we knew would Attend that Court, I told him that Mr. Campbell would be at home in a day or two if he would be so kind as Call, he, himself & some other person would be at Court, which he promised me he would do I never heard

Library of Congress

any more of till I received a very Short message from you to come that moment to Mr. Hawkins and Execute the Mortgage I must Confess it Struck me with a little Surprise, as there was Several Gentn. at that Instant with me, And soon as I could gett Clear of them I came down, The Balle which will be due from this last years dealing I fully Intended should be paid within or nigh the time mentioned I am not certain as to the exact time I had the first of your Course Flower I think it was in February or March, and was to pay for it within the 12 Mo. At the time I made that engagement I did not depend on makeing the payment out of the Commodity itself but had several other very reasonable prosspects to have received that sum from but to my no small mortification have failed in them all and particularly in that of Mr. Amblers where I thought I had an Intire dependence, he not only disapointed me, but Insults me for telling him my necessity and the particular engagemts. I was under to pay certain Sums, you was present When Smith Ashured the payment to me Novr. 12 Mo. he then putt me off till April. & told me he had sold Ambler the Land on purpose to raise money to discharge my debt refered me to him & give me a letter for paymt. Mr. Campbell went down on purpose to receive the money, & gott him to Ashume [assume??] & pay to Amount of £300 the whole Amounting to £900 & odd in Novr. last waited on him again when I received the Inclosed letter from him, I dont offer these things as any excuses Only to Mitigate in some small Degree my disapointing you Add to this the Advantages which many taks of the present times and will not make us any payments, Out of my whole Fishing last year I have received 15 punceons of Jamaica Rum & three Hhd. Sugar this is my whole Amount received for 1000 Barrels herrings all the Rum Excepting 2 hhd. remains on hand—You say I bought your Coarse Flower very reasonable I must beg leave to State this matter Fairly to you & In the first place there was a very great Misunderstanding between you & I in our Original Agreeemt. what I offered you was 10/ for your Middlings & Ship Stuff on an Average but they were to be putt up Seperately, that I might use them as Occation required to the best Advantage, in place of which for the better half of all I had I gott only the Ship Stuff with a very large proportion of shorts that I never Once Dreamt of, and in the Whole delivery I had not one Barrell of Middlings This was so far from being any Bargain on my Side that I do declare to you it was the

Library of Congress

worst of the kind I ever made. I had every day in my office much better Stuff than the first part half of yours was for 9/ to pay when and in what Commodity I choice—I acquies in every thing as you represent them and that you ought to be pointedly paid As I understod the matter I was to pay you within or at the expiration of 12 Mo. from the delivery of the first of ye Flower which I think was in March as no Invoice was sent with it I have not the exact time and by that time if I live I hope to pay you, its not in my power at this time I have no money but as fast as I receive it you shall have it, it would be more pleasing to me to pay before the time than after, I have dealt largely with you when there was not so many purchasers and allways given you good prices and upon the whole have not disapointed you greatly I believe I must now sett my self down Contented and see others trade with more Success the path I made for them As you have frequent Applications made to you for Fishing Landings and Fish I have in your Fish House above 2000 Bushs good Salt which as its Stored I think well worth 2/ per Bushel I shall also have from 800 to 1000 full Bound Barrels & there is upwards of 200 hhd. in & about the House all of which I empower you to sell and receive the Amount if any such offer should fall in your way The Barrels Cost me 4/ & the hhd. 9 should be willing to take the same price for I congratulate you on your Success in Selling your Flower at aso good a price I wish if you should be pinched to make up the quantity youd take in 150 or 200 Barrels of mine at 14/ & you may depend it shall not be inferior in quality as its made of the best White Wheat, I am Blamed for raising the price [mutilated] Wheat, When I have not Cash I cannot expect to purchase as they [covered by seal] with Cash in hand if I pay in Commoditys I must expect to give a [covered by seal] more & have not exceeded 5/ for the best some for 4/3 4/6 & 4/7—

May you live long & be happy, and forever be a Stranger to the uneaseyness of Mind that I at present feel, I am with a grateful sense of all your Favours & Indulgences

Your Much Oblidged and Humble Servt. ROBERT ADAM

Mr. Washington informed me that the Gentleman, that purchased your Flower wanted 400 Barrels Bread I wish you had thought of Recomendng him to me it would have been

Library of Congress

a great help to me I could have furnished him in a reasonable time with the quantity and such good Bread as he could not have gott on the Continent at the same price (14/ per bl.) if its not too late I should be Glad youd yet mention it by letter to him, we cannot turn our Bread into Cash I do not beleve in all your quantity of Stuff & my own which was nearly the same I have ever received £50—yet its a Branch of Business I'm in some measure Obliged to Carry on but requires a long time to come to any head or as we may say turn in again [mutilated] assisting, in the Course of our Business—